

New buildings create new base fire safety methods

By: Lt. Col. Mark Lynskey
179th Safety Office

There is a lot of construction recently on base. Operations is getting ready to move into a brand new building. Plans is moving into the wing building and their new office broke up the 'normal' rat maze flow in building 422. I know you are wondering where I am going with this.

My point is simple. New buildings and changes to our existing buildings bring new pathways and new emergency exits, new fire pull boxes and new fire extinguisher locations.

Those lighted signs over the doors that direct us to the fire exit are basically a visual training aid. Why do I say a

training aid? After going in the old security building with our fire department, on my hands and knees, you soon realize with a lot of smoke you will never see one of those signs except maybe at the beginning of a fire. If you aren't lucky enough to get out early, I hope you already considered your primary and alternate route so you can do it "in the blind."

How many of you now reading this article can readily tell where your nearest fire pull box and fire extinguisher are located? For those of you in a building where you have been for awhile, I doubt very many of you could readily identify those areas without a search. If a fire starts in

your building or office and you want to be the hero and find the extinguisher to contain the fire; while your panic level is rising, can you find that recessed location? Yes, in many new buildings and some old ones, we try to place the fire extinguisher somewhere out of the way so we don't interfere with the aesthetics of our beautifully designed government buildings.

My final point is this...even for those of us who have long since become familiar with our local rat maze, occasionally we should remind ourselves where the nearest fire pull box, fire extinguisher and alternate locations can be found.

Cell phones and gas pumps a dangerous combination

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Heed warnings! Some lessons are best learned without the experience. Cell phones and gasoline don't mix. These three incidents were reported at gas stations.

o While pumping fuel, a cell phone placed on the trunk of the car rang. The car caught fire from fumes emitted from the tank.

o A man got his face burned while talking on the phone when refueling his car.

o A cell phone burned a man's trousers — the phone in his pocket rang while refueling his car.

How did it happen? The keypad or ringer apparently produces a small electric spark ... enough to ignite petrol/gas fumes. These incidents could be avoided. Keep your cell phone switched off at gas stations. If expecting an urgent call and the phone can't be switched off, keep it in the car. Don't answer a cell phone when fueling up.

Basic training opens chemical warfare facility

By: Airman 1st Class Amanda Currier
37th Training Wing Public Affairs

Times are changing, and Air Force basic military training is evolving with them. The Air Force unveiled its latest addition to BMT last September at Warrior Week encampment site: a nuclear, biological, chemical and conventional warfare training facility.

"The addition of this new facility will ensure the best possible training for our airmen facing uncertainties in the world today," said Brig. Gen. Fred Van Valkenburg, Jr., commander of the 37th Training Wing.

Warrior Week, which was originally established about three years ago, gives trainees the opportunity to go in the field to get a taste of what it would be like in a wartime situation.

Now, the week includes trainees passing through the NBCC training facility, allowing them to test the integrity of their gas masks. Troops enter one of the facility's two 400-square-foot sealed chambers in full chemical warfare gear. Once inside, they are exposed to substance similar to pepper spray, known as CS gas.

"Trainees who are not wearing their



Members of the Ohio ANG tour the Warrior Week camp at BMT in January 2003.

masks properly will smell a slightly peppery odor and experience teary eyes and a runny nose," said Capt. David May, 737th field training flight commander.

Once trainees have been inside the chamber for a few minutes, instructors have them remove their masks, so they can get a better understanding of how well their gear really works, he said.

"This facility gives airmen confidence in their gear," May said.